

CEO Report

October 2024 Board Meeting

- * HCI – Health Colorado Inc
- * HCPF – Health Care Policy and Finance
- * BHA – Behavioral Health Administration
- *BHASO – Behavioral Health Administrative Service Organization
- *RAE – Regional Accountable Entity
- * DOI – Department of Insurance
- * PPS – Prospective Payment System
- * PHE – Public Health Emergency
- *CSNP – Comprehensive Safety Net Provider
- * JBC- Joint Budget Committee
- *PIAC- Program Improvement Advisory Committee

Health Colorado Inc. (HCI):

We are beginning to get into the details of the wind-down plan for HCI. We have 8 months left on the contract and anticipate beginning to have conversations with Rocky Mountain Health Plans in early January to begin discussing the transition. Melissa Wickliffe with Carelon has resigned. Melissa was the Colorado State Regional Operations Director. Briana Duffy will assume the role of Carelon representative on the HCI Board of Directors. We will leave the Vice-Chair vacant due to this transition. Carelon was not awarded any of the BHASO contracts, and we anticipate some internal transitions as we continue to see the changes in Colorado through the closing of the contract.

Lori is continuing to advocate and trying to negotiate the transition plan for herself and the HCI staff. At this time, the HCI board is not willing to negotiate further at this time as HCI still does not have an approved budget, and there is still a lot of uncertainty regarding the financial structure and risk to HCI partners.

On October 12th, the HCI board meet with Dave Ducharme and Matt Sundeen to discuss the wind-down and closeout expectations for closing HCI and continued claims processing.

HCI did have a breach committed by the payroll company they contract with. At this time, this is an issue between HCI and the third-party contractor and not an employment law issue. Due to the small number involved in the breach, there is no need to report to any agency.

Health Care Policy and Finance (HCPF):

Kim Bimesterfer provided a presentation about PHE unwind at the monthly PIAC meeting. She acknowledged problems with eligibility determinations and re-enrollments, presented the department's latest numbers, and explained the initiatives being undertaken to streamline and improve processes. PIAC members pressed her on a number of fronts:

- What is HCPF contemplating in addressing the powerful testimony from providers at last week's JBC listening session about the deficits, layoffs, and program closures resulting from decreased Medicaid funding? Kim responded that they are looking at how to get more funds from the federal government. In addition to expanding the hospital provider fee, she also noted that the feds may have to acknowledge that the transition period is longer than they'd planned for, which seemed to imply that the state wants to ask CMS to help fill the hole. She also noted that it isn't just providers who have been affected; it is also RAEs. (Note: Konnie Martin presented to the JBC on behalf of rural hospitals and discussed the impact of the PHE unwind for the San Luis Valley. Dante Gonzales, with Centennial Mental Health Center, was the representative giving testimony on behalf of Rural Mental Health Center to the JBC).
- PEAK is a nightmare, had been down since the weekend. Kim indicated surprise at that.
- Consumer rep Tom Keller expressed considerable frustration. He noted repeatedly that we'd known about these problems for months, "the time for listening is over," and we can't wait for legislators to figure it out: it's on the Department to do so.
- Kelly Phillips-Henry (Aurora Mental Health Center CEO) noted that Colorado is near the bottom of states for BH funding and asked what Kim believes is the way to ensure we have enough. Kim responded that HCPF has doubled its BH funding over the last 5 years but that the current budget environment will necessitate hard choices and difficult conversations.

Behavioral Health Administration (BHA):

The Commissioner said that she wants BHA to provide "corporate oversight" to the BHASOs. In addition to a BHASO director at BHA, she intends to provide personal oversight.

The BHA is continuing to have issues staffing open positions and turnover of key positions. Another key position has been created: Chief Strategy Officer for the BHA.

- Psychiatrist advisory group: Commissioner Smith said she has been talking to CU Dept. of Psychiatry about advising BHA on the development of addiction treatment legislation and policies. She said that she has been struck by BHA not having medical advisement on recommendations and policies.
- Commissioner's Community Conversations: The Commissioner noted that an overriding theme in these meetings has been access to care. CBHC staff noted that "access" has multiple dimensions, and it's important to know exactly what challenges people are experiencing also noting the ongoing workforce issues.

Colorado Behavioral Health Council (CBHC):

Thursday October 10th, the Joint Budget Committee hosted a “listening session” with CEOs of safety net health care providers about the impact of the unwind. This idea was suggested to Rep. Taggart by Community Reach/Jefferson Center lobbyists Tanya Kelly-Bowry and Heather Retzko. Kiara (Jefferson Center CEO), Dante (Centennial MHC CEO), and Carl (Wellpower, CEO), all spoke, along with CEOs from FQs, non-FQ primary care clinics, and hospitals. The goal of the session was to shine a spotlight on exactly what is happening to safety net providers and the clients they serve without any intermediation from HCPF. Each CEO painted a grim picture of massive budget cuts, program shrinkage, staff reductions, and decreased access to care. The CMHC CEOs did a superb job of connecting the impact of the unwind with the other “perfect storm” stressors on their budgets, making clear that for behavioral health safety net providers, the problem goes well beyond the unwind - and thus, the solutions must as well.

Michele Ames has conceived a guiding strategy, “Save Our Safety Net.”

CBHC continues working closely with HCPF to give input on the HCPFs proposed new cost reporting.

CBHC is also working closely with HCPF on the CCBHC grant application, which has been submitted. HCPF, CBHC and center staff will continue meeting regularly in preparation of an announcement and any additional requests for information that may arise. The deadline for feedback on the CCBHC efforts has been extended to November 7th.

CBHC is continuing to work on relationship developments with BHA, HCPF, and advocacy groups.

SYCARE:

We have a new potential buyer for the building.

Southern Colorado Health Network (SCHN):

SCHN had a follow-up meeting to discuss the group's role and support in the New Region. There are no changes at this time.

Third Horizon Consultation Firm:

No update at this time

Local Leadership Connections/Meetings:

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| • Konnie Martin | • Rocky Mountain Leadership team |
| • Jania Arnoldi | • Adams State University & B&G Club |
| • Daniel Darting | • Southern Colorado Health Network |